

National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Conference (NELAC) and Program (NELAP)



The Goal

The goal of NELAC is to foster the generation of environmental laboratory data of known and acceptable quality on which to base public health and environmental management decisions.

The Process

- ❖ **Multi-State/Agency Endorsement.** A cooperative association of state and federal agencies including EPA, DoD, and DoE.
- ❖ **Multi-Program Applicability.** Provides a standard for operational performance applicable to all laboratories performing compliance testing for SDWA, CWA, CAA, RCRA, and CERCLA.
- ❖ **Public and Private Representation.** Standards are developed and reviewed by representatives from both the public and private sector.
- ❖ **Annual Standards Review and Consensus Update.** Standards are revised and adopted by consensus at NELAC.
- ❖ **Comprehensive Coverage.**
 - Analytical testing of environmental samples
 - Federal (EPA) recognition of state and federal Accrediting Authorities
 - Laboratory on site assessment
 - Proficiency testing
 - Field testing

The Benefits to Regulatory Authorities

- ❖ **Comparable and Defensible Environmental Data.** Data produced according to NELAC quality standards provide defined and documented quality.
- ❖ **Reduced Cost.** Shared access to laboratory data and assessments reduces costs due to duplication of effort, resulting in savings for state and federal accrediting authorities, as well as laboratories. Options to share training and simplify rule making also reduces costs.
- ❖ **More Effective Use of Resources and Project Dollars.** NELAP provides baseline quality management and data expectations for environmental laboratories, freeing up valuable project hours to focus on project-specific requirements.
- ❖ **Multi-sector Wisdom and Expertise.** The NELAC standards development process encourages the pooling of expertise and perspective from multiple agencies, states and various groups in the private sector for the decision-making and standards-setting process.
- ❖ **DoD Recognized and Endorsed.** DoD has incorporated the requirements of the NELAC quality system standard in its Quality System Manual for DoD projects (US Navy, Air Force Center for Environmental Excellence and the Army Corps of Engineers).



The Program

- ❖ **Program Support Provided by EPA's NELAP.** EPA administers, funds, and assists in the NELAC process.
- ❖ **Implementation of NELAC standards Coordinated.** NELAP recognizes state and federal agencies as Accrediting Authorities and will accredit at least one state laboratory in states applying to NELAP.
- ❖ **Reciprocity Required.**
 - Requires reciprocal recognition of accreditation among state and federal NELAP Accrediting Authorities.
 - In addition, many states and agencies currently outside the program recognize NELAP accredited laboratories.

For more information visit our website
<http://www.epa.gov/ttn/nelac/>



NELAP Accredited Laboratories by State

